

training in cleanliness. With children over five, it is sometimes necessary, and sometimes wise, actually to request them to forgo such visits in common to the lavatory ; but again without making a great fuss, or suggesting that there is anything wicked or morally dangerous in such happenings.

The frequent and defiant wish of the small boy to urinate in public, or secretly in a corner of the garden, instead of in the lavatory, is best met by a firm request; but again without punishments or severe reproaches. The impulse does not persist if it is met in this way. The grounds stated for the request should be • purely practical and hygienic. If we say that it is a bad and wicked thing to do, we often increase the child's wish to do it, that is, to gain the reassurance of showing that he dares to do it. Ursula's desire to use her chamber in public (p. 261) would have been best met by a firm refusal on the ground that, from the point of view of hygiene, such things are best kept in the place assigned to them, as well as on the social ground that people in general prefer not to see these-processes occurring and that she herself would, in the end, be happier if she kept them private. There is no need to indulge the child in these exhibitionistic tendencies, any more than there is need to treat her as a reprobate because she feels them.

(c) *Verbal Exhibitionism*

The question of how to deal with children's talk about excretory or genital matters is a rather more difficult one than that of dealing with actual behaviour. It is obviously easier to forbid or deflect actual sexual play than to forbid or deflect chanting or joking about these things. The children themselves have a sense of reality in this regard, and distinguish between words and deeds. Sometimes they dis-

tinguish this better than the grown-ups do,
whose own
anxieties about what children may *do* often lead
them to treat
their naive remarks as severely as if they
were actions.
My^own experience leads me to believe that it
is helpful to
the child if the grown-ups do not make this error
in the earlier
years. Naive questions or jokes or the verbal
exhibitionism
of children between, say, three and five years,
should not be
treated as if they were actions. This channel
of discharge
in words should be left open to the children at a
time when they
are faced with the biggest struggles in their
inner psychic